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HARFORD COUNTY EXECUTIVE



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DIRECTOR
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MARY F. CHANCE
DIRECTOR OF ADMINISTRATION


OFFICE OF HUMAN RELATIONS

HARFORD COUNTY GOVERNMENT

HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION MEETING

Thursday, November 3, 2011, 6:30 p.m.
McFaul Activity Center
525 West MacPhail Road, Bel Air, MD 21014

MINUTES

Attending:

Wendell Baxter, Jr., Chairperson
Uyesh Bhatti
Michael Bowen
Lyn Jacobs-Elliott
Neslie Ethridge
Sylvia Bryant, Manager

Bruce Lewis
LaVerne Pitts
Christina Presberry
Cathy Price, Vice Chairperson

Absent:

Gladys Pace
Melynda Velez

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Wendell Baxter at 6:40 p.m. He thanked the commissioners for attending.

II. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The commissioners reviewed and approved the minutes from the September Retreat and October meeting upon the motion of Cathy Price, second by LaVerne Pitts.

III. GUESTS

None

IV. GUEST SPEAKER

None

V. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Chairman Baxter reported that he, Lyn Jacobs-Elliott and Sylvia Bryant attended the Commissioners Training Conference sponsored by MAHRA on Thursday, October 27, Howard County. He stated that he found the Conference enlightening; especially Dr. Donna Beyer's session explaining transgender status and the one outlining Maryland's demographic statistics

~Preserving Harford's past; promoting Harford's future~

based on the 2010 Census. Maryland is nearly a majority minority state based on this data. Chairman Baxter invited Ms. Elliott to share her thoughts; she agreed with his assessment.

VI. COORDINATOR'S REPORT

Ms. Bryant reported the following:

- A. The *Diversity Literacy Fair* was held on Saturday, October 15, Bel Air Barnes & Noble. She thanked the commissioners for being in place and invited those who participated in the event to express their thoughts concerning it:
 1. Ms. Pitts noted that she was part of the morning set-up crew. She observed that it appeared that only one person knew exactly what needed to be done. She suggested a chart assigning tasks to various people might help spread this responsibility around.
 2. Ms. Price stated that she attended later in the day; she noted lots of positive reactions from youngsters 8-9 and under. She enjoyed Dr. Q's presentation. People seemed to like the student performers; she recommended having student performers again next year. Ms. Price was curious about how many participants there were that day.
 3. Ms. Jacobs-Elliott advised that she was a part of the clean-up team. She thought it seemed like everyone had a good time at the event.
- B. Ms. Bryant noted that she attended the *MAHRA Commissioners Training Conference* and agreed with what had been stated in the regard.
- C. Ms. Bryant advised that she attended the *Commission on Disabilities Annual Employment Recognition Luncheon* (Thursday, October 20); the Commission on Disabilities recognized individuals with disabilities for their work excellence and their employers for providing top notch work experiences and environments.
- D. Ms. Bryant noted that she attended the *Community Partnership Luncheon* at Magnolia Middle School (Tuesday, October 25). The Luncheon was designed to bring community leaders, business people and the school administration together to access needs and determine partnership possibilities. The school administration is very concerned about preparing students for the world, equipping them to be successful in their community.
- E. Ms. Bryant stated that she attended the *Superintendent's Cultural Proficiency Council* meeting (Thursday, October 13) facilitated by Commissioner Gladys Pace. Ms. Bryant yielded to Ms. Pace who reported that the session was well attended and interactive. Ms. Pace was pleased with the participation.
- F. *Request for Proposals for Fair Housing Services* – no new information to report at this time; awaiting response to the revised, reissued RFP.
- G. *Bylaws* – The County Attorney reviewed the Commission's Bylaws, tweaked them a bit and signed them to indicate his approval. The commissioners were pleased with this progress and Chairman Baxter signed the Bylaws on their behalf. The next step will involve a public hearing for public comment.

- H. New Counsel – Meaghan Alegi is the attorney assigned to the Commission following a realignment of duties within the Department of Law. Richard Herbig previously served in this capacity.
- I. *Complaints* – the Office continues its processing of two complaints.
 - 1. *Occupation and disability*. The office is finalizing a settlement to keep the complainant in his unit.
 - 2. *National Origin* – The Office is awaiting the respondents' (local employer) answers to the complaint.

IX. OLD BUSINESS

- A. *Joseph Bond/Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Humanitarian Awards Breakfast*, Thursday, January 19, 2012, 8:00 a.m.
 - 1. Sponsorship Packets – Ms. Bryant shared the draft sponsorship package with the commissioners. They were pleased with the design of these materials and suggested some edits.
 - 2. Honoree – Ms. Bryant advised that she checked with the County Executive via Ms. Hendrix and found them supportive of the idea of honoring Frank Boston. They did not offer any additional honoree suggestions. The commissioners tossed around the idea of recognizing some others but decided to make Mr. Boston the sole honoree for 2012.
 - 3. Program –
 - a. Speaker - Bruce Lewis suggested Chief Judge Robert Bell as the keynote speaker for the event. Mr. Lewis and Chief Judge Bell are alums of the same university. They met recently at a gathering and Mr. Lewis asked him about coming to Harford County to speak. Chief Judge Bell seemed amenable to the idea; he provided his office contact. Contact has been made with Chief Judge Bell's office; we're awaiting their response to the invitation.
 - b. Entertainment – LaVerne Pitts contacted the head of the music department at Edgewood High School about student performers. Singers and their accompanist have committed to performing at the Breakfast.
 - c. Emcee – Christina Presberry agreed to serve in this capacity.
 - d. Blessing – Gladys Pace consented to offer the blessing at the event.
 - e. Closing – Bruce Lewis committed to offering the closing prayer for the Breakfast.
 - f. Miscellaneous – the commissioners suggested contacting Harford Cable Network about possibly taping the event. They also noted that a photographer is needed to cover the event.
 - 4. Publicity – Ms. Bryant reminded the commissioners about the plan to make the upcoming Humanitarian Award Breakfast a public event rather than by invitation only. The commissioners decided on a \$10 ticket price with a discounted price of \$5 for seniors (55+).
 - 5. Facility – Chesapeake Center, Harford Community College is the site for the 2012 Humanitarian Awards Breakfast.

- B. *Civil Rights Tour* (March 16-23, 2012) – Ms. Bryant told the commissioners that the ticket price for a student to go on the Tour is \$1850. The commissioners decided to donate to the scholarship fund for students wishing to go on the trip; the College will take on task of deciding which students will receive support, etc.
- C. *April is Fair Housing Month* – Nothing to report at this time.
- D. *Celebration of Cultures* is scheduled for May 5, 2012, at the Bel Air Armory, 37 North Main Street, Bel Air. Ms. Bryant and Melynda Velez met to begin discussing publicity for this event.

X. NEW BUSINESS

- A. *Smithsonian Exhibit Tour* – a preliminary meeting is scheduled for all organizations interested in participating with this project on Wednesday, November .
- B. *Grant in Aid* – Wendell Baxter, Gladys Pace, and Christina Presberry volunteered to serve on the board that will review grant applications submitted to the Department of Community Services for funding. They should receive preliminary information shortly if not already.

XI. COMMENTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

The commissioners were reminded of various events and happenings throughout the County (see agenda for details). Ms. Presberry noted that the Sheriff's Office Town Hall Meeting scheduled in Bel Air is one of a series of such meetings the Sheriff plans to conduct quarterly in various locations throughout the County. Though the Town Hall Meeting is located in a certain geographic area, citizen questions/comments need not be limited to that area.

Chairman Baxter noted that he hoped to attend the Dr. Irvine's Book Signing and Lecture at the Hosanna School.

XII. NEXT MEETING DATE

The next Commission meeting is scheduled for Thursday, December 8, 2011, 6:30 p.m., McFaul Activity Center.

XIII. ADJOURN

The session ended at 8:15 p.m. upon the motion of Cathy Price, second by Mike Bowen.

Prepared by

Sylvia W. Bryant